

OUR RELIGIOUS COLUMN.

A Church Trouble.

REV. DR. BOMBERGER AND THE SYNOD OF THE GERMAN REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

EDITOR EVENING TELEGRAPH:—As the article which in part furnished the occasion for the enclosed action taken by the Synod of the German Reformed Church in the United States, at its annual session held in Hagerstown, Md., from the 21st to the 29th of October, was published in your columns, it is thought that you will cheerfully give it publicity through the same channel. The action was taken by a respectable, religious body solely in self-vindication against a serious charge.

Yours, very respectfully,
SAMUEL R. FISHER, Stated Clerk.
Philadelphia, Nov. 5, 1868.

The retiring President called the attention of the Synod to certain articles published by one of its members, which he regarded as seriously reflecting on its character and requiring some special action. The subject was referred to a committee, which subsequently submitted the following report, which was unanimously adopted:

SUMMARY OF RELIGIOUS NEWS.

EPISCOPAL.

—The Gloria Patri Church ("Episcopal"), of this city, lately had Mr. Keel, its pastor, the vestry thought he worked too hard himself, and imposed too many rules on his people, and so he would do himself. "The interior I never felt better in my life." "But the barn will not hold all you have raked and gathered." "Then we must build a greater." "But we have already spent over \$5000 in that way." "Well done, but you see the harvest is not all gathered yet. You build more barns, and I will go gathering in." But the vestry would not be convinced, and passed a vote disapproving of his measures, and he resigned. In the sermon preached as his farewell to the people, he said, "I have given up my wife since I married her, and these words: 'I am a good man, and a good son.'"

It seems from a copy of an unauthorised publication, April number, 1868, of which Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D., is principal editor, and also several extracts from a daily paper published in Philadelphia, that the said J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D., has published and given circulation to the following statements, over his own signature, in regard to this Synod:

"Those unwilling to vote for Dr. Gerhart were not permitted to nominate their candidate for theological professor." "Fee required to allow those desiring to have their candidate was an extraordinary proceeding, unknown even among secular politicians, and without a precedent in our Church."

He also induces, "as in full accordance with the facts," the statement made in an item in the Philadelphia EVENING TELEGRAPH, April 25, 1868. It charges the Synod, under whose sole control stood the Theological Seminary, with being unwilling to vote for Dr. Gerhart, and, also, that it is "becoming so churchly as to cease to be Reformed."

To prevent the gross misrepresentation here published to the world, it is only needed that the plain facts as they stand in connection with the late election of Theological Professor, be set forth.

It is beyond possibility of successful contradiction that the Committee on Nomination of the Synod, out of three out of the seven were known as friendly to Dr. Gerhart, and the very small minority in that Synod, at first unanimously reported, but a single name. To this objection were raised by Dr. Bomberger and others; and after it was decided that, according to the Constitution of the Church, none could be legally voted for who were not first put in nomination, the report, to accommodate those who desired another candidate, was recommended, with instructions to add another name.

When they again reported, the name of Dr. Gerhart was rejected, and the name of the discarded party was presented, along with that of him who had been previously nominated. Great offense was taken at this by the person thus-nominated, and he begged to be shielded from insult and injury. At this point, and not before, mention was made of the name of another brother as an acceptable candidate, but who, in fact, was not identified in any way with that party. His name Dr. Bomberger wished the chairman of the committee, or the committee of the Synod, to substitute in his place his own. To have the feelings of Dr. Bomberger, the original report was substituted for the second.

The Synod was not a packed, partisan, or factious body in any sense. It was made up of delegates regularly chosen from the several classes, before the necessity for the Professorial election was before the Church. The Synod did not reject any nomination made by the party now claiming to be agreed; nor did it refuse to allow them to nominate or vote for a man of their choice. There was no nomination to be voted for in any way by the Synod, although they were repeatedly told that such a course was in the largest liberty accorded them.

BAPTIST.

—The rapid advance of Baptist principles in Germantown is quite remarkable. Six years ago, the first prayer meeting was held in a private house, and now there are over 2000 Baptists in the place; now there are three well-established and prosperous churches. The First Church, under Brother Gill's administration, is much encouraged. The Second Church, Brother Helms' Pastor, is making headway slowly but steadily, on the classic soil which they occupy; Brother Helms has been laid aside for some weeks by typhoid fever, from which he now is slowly recovering. Fears were entertained at one time that his work on earth was done, but he has recently returned to his pulpit. The Third Church, Brother Long's Pastor, there are two candidates awaiting baptism, and great solemnity prevails in their meetings. Their chapel is ready for the slaves, and they hope to enter it about the opening of the new year.

A correspondent, writing to the *Rel. (Ark.) Herald*, says:—"God is blessing us on the frontier. Our little association two years ago numbered 220—you remember I sent you an appeal to publish for us—now more than 1300. In the past two years, in the bounds of our association, the membership has increased 1000, and has now reached near 1500 white people."

The offense also is not an isolated act, but is only one in a general bad course of similar conduct on the part of this Synod and her institutions, failing to investigate and reprimand, which does not belong to your Committee, but which, on common rumor, may be gathered from the church at large.

Such gross violation of truth and breach of duty to the Church demand that the synod rebuke it as its provocation merits. Inasmuch as the reverend body, the highest respect and reputation can make, for a recognition of the cause of Christian fidelity, a minister of the Reformed Church, therefore,

Resolved. That this Synod require from the said J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D., a public, full, and unequivocal retraction in writing of the above recited language; and that he be enjoined to purge himself from the offense given by it to his body.

Resolved. That in case he shall neglect or refuse to comply with the conditions of the above resolution to the satisfaction of the Synod at 10 o'clock on Saturday morning, he be debarred from all the privileges and benefits of this Synod.

This report was adopted on Friday afternoon, previous to the hour specified in it, Dr. Bomberger offered to Synod a paper, which he wished to have received as meeting the demand made upon him. It did not, however, prove satisfactory. After several attempts at a modification of the paper, it was withdrawn, and the following offered in its place, which was received by a unanimous vote:—

—*I retract the publication of the words or sentiments referred to in the report of the Committee, which are deemed objectionable by this Synod, and regret that they should have become the occasion of offense.* —J. H. A. BOMBERGER.

An additional paper qualifying the above resolution was offered by Dr. Bomberger. It was, however, laid on the table.

A Teacher's covenant.

The following covenant, which was prepared by one of our city Baptist schools, is worthy of a wider circulation and practical adoption:—

Impressed with the responsibility of our position, and feeling the need of greater faithfulness in the service of our Master, we do as teachers in the — Sunday School, make the following engagements:—

To be present in our classes every Sabbath 24 o'clock, the hour for opening the school, to remain through the entire session.

To be present in our classes, to provide subsistence, or give the superintendent timely notice, will prudently and studiously prepare lessons at home, and attend the teachers' meetings with all possible punctuality.

We will maintain a thorough supervision of all our scholars, visiting every new school in a week of his admission, and all others monthly, if possible.

We will constantly remember that by example, by instruction, and by prayer, we must lead our pupils to Jesus; and that to fulfill this service.

We will do all this in humble dependence on Him who alone can crown our efforts in success.

Trust in God.

For the blessedness of that man who has enabled to realize the most entire conviction, and that not as a theory, but as practical fact—that God doeth all things well, and that work is perfect!

The grinding and low care of this life have

no place with him. He knows that all his affairs are guided by One who cannot err—that he is watched over for good by One who never fails. Human life is not worth of him and sinks him off, if he becomes troublesome to his wants, but he bears it like—his God invites, solicits, is gratified by the entireness of his dependence and by the full and undivided burden of his care.

Strange it is that we are so slow to claim the right thus given us, and which we ought to regard as inestimable privilege. Yet how few are known to any of us, who do truly realize the many promises and gracious invitations that which can alone make this life tolerable.

God loved me.

Some years ago two gentlemen were riding together, and as they were about to separate, one addressed the other thus:—

"Do you ever read your Bible?"

"Yes, but I get no benefit from it, because to tell the truth I feel I do not love God."

"Nor do I," replied the other, "but God loves me."

—*The First Reformed Presbyterian Church, in connection with General Seelye, worshipping in Horticultural Hall, in this city, had their semi-annual communion last evening. Over two hundred members communed, and less were admitted to communion, on examination and by letter. The communion, we believe, have not decided on a pastor, nor on a site for their future home of worship.*

At a special meeting of the First Presbytery of New York, on the 21st October, the Rev. Dr. James Earle and the Rev. Robert Armstrong resigned the pastorates which they have held for a number of years, the former of the Seven H Avenue Church, New York, and the latter of the First United Presbyterian Church, New York, New York. This is the episcopate of these brethren over both the pastorates, by electing themselves of the church at large, by electing themselves to the good of the Theological Seminary; but it is a matter of deep regret that two important churches are thus left without pastors.

—*After thoughtful provision for his family and relations, Milton Clerk of Watertown, New York, bequeaths \$1000 to the Sane Street Church, Watertown, for the purchase of a parsonage. To the Bible Society, Home Missions, and Foreign Missions, he bequeaths \$5000 each, over and above what he has given to the Theological Seminary, and the amount of \$3000 to the tract societies, with the entire cost of \$3000 utterly canceled—the only remaining liability, and one of twenty years standing, of \$300 obbligated; collections and contributions amounting to some \$12,000, or more than double the total of any preceding three years; a commendation list of 269, or 110 more than in 1867; a church in which every seat is taken, and some twice rented, and whose anticipated income of hundreds of dollars over and above the expenses of the tract societies, school, library, and parsonage, was not even approached.*

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The case presents, then, in the aforesaid published statements, what may well be considered a slanderous perversion of facts and a dangerous public libel on the Synod, absolutely without foundation or warrant.

The offense also is not an isolated act, but is only one in a general bad course of similar conduct on the part of this Synod and her institutions, failing to investigate and reprimand, which does not belong to your Committee, but which, on common rumor, may be gathered from the church at large.

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of all our scholars, visiting every new school in a week of his admission, and all others monthly, if possible.

We will constantly remember that by example, by instruction, and by prayer, we must lead our pupils to Jesus; and that to fulfill this service.

We will do all this in humble dependence on Him who alone can crown our efforts in success.

The managers of "The Home for the Aged," in Baltimore, Maryland, have rented from the trustees of "The City Station" the old parsonage in the rear of the Light Street Church, which they propose to use as "a home" for the more needy among the aged females, until a more suitable place can be procured. There is already over ten thousand dollars in the treasury of the society.

The California Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at its recent session in San Francisco, appointed a committee to take action in reference to the Chinese in their midst.

CATHOLIC.

In spite of the poverty of Ireland, the large amount of hard cash that is said to have been invested in churches, convents, schools, and hospitals by the Roman Catholic population, during the present century, almost exceeds belief. In the last edition of Malone's *Church History of Ireland* it is stated that within the period we have mentioned Irish Romanism has expended upon convents and monasteries, £3,200,000, and upon 118 schools, £265,000. There are 278 Sunday Schools, 533 teachers, 42,000 pupils. Average salary of ministers, \$800. Total number of communicants, 36,436.

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DR. KINKELIN, AFTER A RESIDENCE

and practice of thirty years at the Northwest corner of Broad and Union streets, has lately removed to Spring Hill Street, between MARKET and CHEMUTT.

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